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Monday - 23 January 1967

Page 5

17. (Unclassified - GLC) Talked with Richard Cook, of the House Banking and Currency Committee staff, and inquired as to the status of the Ashley Subcommittee report which will contain the ORR paper on the USSR and the automotive age. I pointed out to Cook (as I had done before) that being an unclassified paper, this study was in the public domain, was in the hands of several members of Congress and in view of the attention focused on it by the Evans-Novak column, conceivably could be printed by someone else having access to it. Cook said he was aware of this possibility but hoped that no one else would print the report prior to its publication by the Subcommittee in approximately ten days. He acknowledged that the Evans-Novak column had been sparked by conversations with the Subcommittee and explained that the errors in the article appeared despite the Subcommittee's admonitions in these areas. Cook said if the Agency received any press inquiries regarding this, that they would have no objection to our referring the sources of the inquiries to them. He said this was their problem and they would be glad to accept such calls. He also said he hoped that we would be able to "hold the line" in not giving the report to the press.

I mentioned to Cook the letter we had received from Representative Harvey (a member of the Banking and Currency Committee) regarding the proposed loan for the FIAT plant. Cook said he was aware of the Harvey letter and mentioned several points in connection with it. He said he felt we could handle this adequately with Harvey in a meeting and without a written reply. He added that Harvey is leaving the Committee and that as of now sees no objection to the "FIAT deal." He also said that if Harvey "climbed off" that the Subcommittee's report would not carry much weight. Cook also made several other suggestions for our consideration when we discuss this subject with Harvey. He said he would like very much to sit in on the meeting but certainly did not want to press the point.


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